

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJECT: ALLEGED US/NATO INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNMENT FORMATION

REF: (A) REYKJAVIK 1112 DTG 241442Z AUG 78
(B) REYKJAVIK 1123 DTG 251432Z AUG 78

1. CHARGES OF ALLEGED US/NATO INTERFERENCE IN ICELAND
INTERNAL AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY IN GOVERNMENT FORMATION
PROCESS, CONTINUED TO APPEAR OVER WEEKEND IN LEFT-WING
THJODVILJINN, ORGAN OF PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE (PA). CHARGES
STEM FROM FAILURE OF PA CHAIRMAN LUDVIK JOSEFSSON TO FORM
COALITION. REBUTTALS TO CHARGES HAVE APPEARED IN OTHER
PAPERS.

2. PREVIOUS ATTACKS (REFTELS) HAVE BEEN ANSWERED BY
DENIALS FROM VARIOUS ICELANDIC POLITICIANS. FOREIGN
MINISTER EINAR AGUSTSSON OF PROGRESSIVE PARTY DECLARED
ICELAND'S MEMBERSHIP IN NATO AND EFTA HAVE HAD NO EFFECT
ON COUNTRY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS; THAT INABILITY OF PA
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TO FORM LEFT-OF-CENTER GOVERNMENT WAS DUE TO INTERNAL
PROBLEMS, NOT RESULT OF OUTSIDE INFLUENCE; AND THAT IN SEVEN
YEARS HE HAS BEEN FONMIN THERE HAS BEEN NO FOREIGN
INTERFERENCE IN GOI INTERNAL AFFAIRS. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC
PARTY (SDP) CHAIRMAN BENEDIKT GRONDAL ANSWERED CHARGE
THAT US AND OTHER WESTERN EMBASSIES HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE
CONTACT WITH SDP LEADERSHIP BY SAYING THAT ONLY DIPLOMATIC

OFFICIAL TO CONTACT HIM SINCE MAY MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS WAS
SOVIET AMBASSADOR.

3. NONETHELESS, ATTACKS AND INNUENDO STILL APPEAR IN
PA PRESS. IN REPORTING VISIT OF AMBASSADORS OF US AND SEVERAL
OTHER WESTERN NATIONS TO MFA (IN CONNECTION WITH MATTER
RELATING TO BONN SUMMIT DECLARATION), THJODVILJINN ASKED
WHETHER VISIT HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH
GOVERNMENT FORMATION TALKS. COMMENTARY IN AUGUST 26
EDITION LINKED SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WITH NATO BY CHARGING
THAT SDP HAS BEEN NATO'S TOOL DURING THESE COALITION
NEGOTIATIONS. AUGUST 27 THJODVILJINN FEATURED FULL-PAGE
ARTICLE BY PA MP ENTITLED "FOREIGN INFLUENCE", STORY
AGAIN BLAMED NATO FOR INABILITY OF JOSEFSSON TO FORM
LEFT-OF-CENTER GOVERNMENT UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP AND
ATTACKED SDP, CHARGING THAT IT IS QTE REMOTE CONTROL-
LED UNQTE BY NATO.

4. OVER WEEKEND, UNAFFILIATED DAILY DAGBLADID PRINTED
ALLEGATIONS BY MEMBER OF THJODVILJINN STAFF THAT GOI
MADE REGULAR REPORTS TO US EMBASSY AND THAT CHAIRMAN
AND FORMER CHAIRMAN OF SDP HAD MET RECENTLY WITH
EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES. FOREIGN MINISTER AGUSTSSON
DISMISSED AS BASELESS CHARGE RE ALLEGED GOI REPORTS
TO THIS EMBASSY, AND SDP CHAIRMAN GRONDAL DESCRIBED
CHARGE AGAINST HIS PARTY AS "COMPLETE FOOLISHNESS".
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5. ATTACKS WILL PROBABLY PERSIST, AT LEAST UNTIL
THIS ROUND OF COALITION TALKS MAKES MORE PROGRESS.
PA ALSO SEEMS TO BE INTERESTED IN PURSUING CURRENT
LINE AS PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN. WHEN SDP MP ASKED CHAIR-
MAN OF PA PARLIAMENTARY GROUP, RAVNAR ARNALDS, ABOUT
THJODVILJINN'S PERSISTENT EFFORTS TO BLAME US AND
NATO FOR JOSEFSSON'S FAILURE TO BECOME PRIME MINISTER,
ARNALDS REPORTEDLY REPLIED THAT EVERY PARTY HAD TO
CREATE PROPAGANDA HOWEVER IT COULD.
BLAKE

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